The Shadow of Power

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Introduction

Today we venture into territory that most people never discuss openly. We will look at how evil triumphs in the world. Why is the world so full of darkness? I need to warn you up front that we will cover some extremely disturbing topics. Some things that will challenge everything you think you know about how power operates. But you are mature enough to handle this. And it is important that we discuss these topics if we want to understand how the world really works. You cannot understand power without understanding its shadow side. You cannot comprehend why things are the way they are without looking at the mechanisms that most people refuse to acknowledge.

Now, I also need to be clear about something else. We are going to do a lot of speculation and theorizing in this session. Do not take anything I say as gospel truth. Do not assume this is the definitive answer to how reality works. The entire point of what we are doing here is to help you develop theories and ideas that allow you to better understand the world around you. These are tools. They are not Truth with a capital T. They are analytical frameworks that you can use to make sense of patterns that otherwise seem random or inexplicable. Think of them like lenses. When you put on different lenses, you see different things. Some lenses reveal details that others obscure. We are trying on different lenses today.

Because of how content moderation works on certain platforms, there are specific words I cannot say out loud. So I will write certain terms down but I will not speak them. If I did, the algorithms would censor this material and you would never see it. That itself tells you something about the world we live in. Certain truths are too dangerous to speak aloud.

Chapter 1

The Pattern of Sacrifice

Let me start with a direct question. What is happening in Israel right now? As you know Israel is besieging and bombarding Gaza. You might have seen the videos on social media. It is disturbing. It is terrible. The images of destruction and death are overwhelming. Now, there is a word we use to describe what is happening in Gaza. A specific term with legal and historical meaning. I cannot say it on this platform, but you know what it is. That word describes the intention behind what we are witnessing.

But here is what I want to argue. The truth is actually far more disturbing than even that word suggests. What is really happening in Gaza is something older and darker. It is a ritual sacrifice. And if you go back and look at the real history of humanity, you will find that this happens quite often. It is not an aberration, it is a pattern.

Some of the most famous examples come from the Aztecs. Archaeologists have excavated Aztec temples and found thousands upon thousands of human skulls. Before the Aztecs went to war, they practiced human sacrifice on a massive scale. They would commit public mass killing of their enemies. This was not hidden. It was celebrated. It was the centerpiece of the religious and political system. The Phoenicians and specifically the Carthaginians were also famous for a particular type of sacrifice, child sacrifice. The Romans wrote extensively about this practice, condemning the Carthaginians for it, though of course the Romans had their own forms of human sacrifice that they preferred not to call by that name.

Let me tell you about the Roman triumph because it illustrates something important. After every major military victory, the Romans would capture the leaders of their defeated enemies, kings and generals and nobles. They would bring these captives back to Rome and parade them through the streets in chains. This parade was called the triumph. It was one of the highest honors a Roman general could receive. The whole city would turn out to watch. The victorious general would ride in a golden chariot while his soldiers marched behind displaying the spoils of war. And at the end of the parade, the captive enemy leaders would be taken to the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill. Jupiter was the chief god of the Roman state. And there in front of the temple, these captives would be ritually strangled to death. The Romans did not call this human sacrifice. They called it execution of enemies. They dressed it up in legal and religious language, but functionally that is exactly what it was. The ritual killing of captives to honor the gods and celebrate Roman power.

So the question we need to ask is why? Why did the Aztecs do this? Why did the Phoenicians do this? Why did the Romans do this? And why today are the Israelis doing something similar in Gaza?

And here is what makes the Gaza situation particularly striking. The demographics tell the story. Almost 47% of Gaza's population is under 18 years old, nearly half. So the majority of people being killed are in fact children. This is not an accident of war. The age distribution of the casualties matches the age distribution of the population.

Now, here is what is most baffling about what is happening in Gaza. We can all see it for ourselves. It is broadcast on social media. It is impossible to ignore. And it is almost as though the Israelis want us to see it. They want us to hate them. You can observe this everywhere in the world. Popular opinion is turning against Israel. There are massive protests in cities across the globe. People who had no previous opinion about the Israeli Palestinian conflict are now horrified by what they are witnessing.

But here is the thing. If the goal was simply to eliminate the population of Gaza, there are much more effective ways to do it. You could poison the water supply. You could introduce biological agents that cause cancer over time. We have the technology to do this quietly and secretly. In 20 or 30 years, the population would be gone and no one would ever know what really happened. Instead, they choose

to do this in front of the entire world openly, brazenly, as if they do not care about international opinion, as if they want to be condemned. And my argument to you is that this is intentional. They want the world to hate them. By doing what they are doing, they are creating the ultimate taboo. They are making themselves into the object of universal disgust and contempt. The entire world is uniting against them.

But here is the dark logic. In the extreme form of Jewish eschatology, in certain fundamentalist religious beliefs, there is an expectation that at the end of days, Israel will fight against the entire world and God will help Israel triumph. This is their theology. This is what some of them actually believe. So, what is really happening is that there are extremists within the Israeli government who want to accelerate this process. They want to bring about the end time scenario where Israel faces the world alone and they believe that God will intervene on their behalf.

Now I want to give you an analogy that will help you understand the strategic logic here in Chinese military history. One of the most famous strategies is called fighting with the river at your back. Here is how it works. Your army is losing. Your soldiers are scattered and demoralized. They are being routed by the enemy. What does the general do? He forces his army to retreat until there is a river directly behind them. Now, there is no escape. The soldiers have only two choices. They can drown in the river or they can fight to the death. And something remarkable happens in that moment. Soldiers who were ready to flee suddenly find new reserves of courage and energy. They become unified and galvanized. They fight with a ferocity they did not know they possessed and often they win. This is one of the most celebrated military strategies in ancient Chinese warfare and it works because it transforms the psychology of the soldiers. When retreat is impossible, the only option is total commitment.

Now, think about what Israel is doing in Gaza through this lens. They are creating their own river. What is the worst thing you can do in modern society? What is the ultimate taboo? Killing children. Mass killing of children. By crossing this line, Israel has eliminated any possibility of retreat. They cannot apologize and go back to normal. The world will never forgive them. They have committed themselves absolutely. Either they go all the way or the world comes to destroy them anyway. There is no exit.

And here is what is even more disturbing. This strategy works. It actually unifies the Israeli population. By making themselves hated by the entire world, they create intense internal solidarity. You can see evidence of this if you look carefully. There are Israelis going around the world deliberately causing trouble, starting fights, shouting provocative slogans on public transportation, creating incidents that will be filmed and shared and that will make people hate Israelis even more. This looks irrational. Why would you want people to hate you? But it is completely intentional. They want to unite themselves by dividing the world. They want to create a situation where every Israeli feels that the whole world is against them and therefore they must stick together absolutely. Does this make sense? It is a dark logic, but it is internally consistent. The more hated they become, the more unified they become, the greater the external threat, the stronger the internal bonds.

Chapter 2

The Technology of Cohesion

Now, I want to unpack this more carefully because there is a deeper mechanism at work here. What we are looking at is a specific technology for creating group cohesion. And this technology has been used throughout human history by various groups who understood its power. To understand how this works, I am going to use a thought experiment. This is going to seem strange at first, but stay with me because it illuminates something profound about human psychology and social organization.

Let us imagine there is an island somewhere in the world. We do not know where it is. It is completely isolated. There is no way to escape from this island once you are there. The island has a central area that is safe. It is a hill in the middle. But everywhere else there are flesh eating monkeys roaming around. Aggressive, vicious monkeys that attack and eat any human they encounter. And there are infinite numbers of these monkeys. The problem is that all the resources you need to survive are located where the monkeys are, trees for building, rivers for water, food sources. Everything you need is in the dangerous zones. You can hide in the safe center, but you cannot survive there. You have to venture out into monkey territory.

Now imagine that one day, for reasons we do not understand, 100 men are mysteriously transported onto this island. They appear in the safe central area. These men range in age from 15 to 65. They come from different countries. They speak different languages. They are from different ethnic groups. They are all poor people with limited education. They have nothing in common except that they are now trapped together on this island.

At first, you would imagine that they would feel completely hopeless. The situation is impossible. These monkeys are everywhere. There is no escape. The men do not even speak the same language. They have no common culture or history. They should just lie down and die. But that is not what happens. What happens in reality is the opposite of despair. In this utterly hopeless situation, these men find something remarkable. They discover a drive, a purpose, a spirit that they never knew they had. They find reasons to fight for each other.

And here is what is fascinating. Very quickly, they will develop a common language. They start with nothing. Some speak Chinese, some speak English, some speak Spanish or Russian or Arabic. But within weeks they are communicating. They create a pidgin language that allows them to coordinate.

Then something else happens with this new shared language. They start telling each other stories. Stories about where they came from, stories about their families and their lives before the island. And these individual stories begin to merge into a common mythology. They develop a founding myth, a story about why they are here. They come to believe that some higher power has chosen them, that they have a sacred purpose, that they are here to accomplish something important, even if they do not fully understand what it is. And from this mythology, they develop rituals, practices that reinforce their new religion. These rituals create intimacy and bonding among the group. They pray together, they eat together, they share everything. And yes, the rituals include physical intimacy. These men will develop sexual bonds with each other. Not because they are homosexual in the modern sense, but because sexual intimacy creates the deepest form of human bonding. When you are fighting for survival and you need absolute trust, physical intimacy is one of the most powerful tools available.

Now, these hundred men need leadership. Someone has to organize them. Someone has to make decisions about when to venture out for resources and how to fight the monkeys. So, they hold a kind of election. Everyone gets a chance to speak, to make their case for why they should lead. There is a man who is 65 years old. He is wise. He has experience. He is strategic. He delivers a powerful speech. He tells everyone how they can survive. He has plans and ideas. He is articulate and persuasive. Then

a young man stands up. He is 15 or 16, maybe 17. He is not articulate at all. He has no grand strategy, no clever ideas. He just stands in front of everyone in silence. And then without a word he takes out a knife and in front of everyone he cuts off his own hand. He does not cry. He does not scream. He just looks at everyone calmly as if nothing happened. As if cutting off your own hand is the most natural thing in the world.

Let me ask you, who does everyone choose to lead them? The wise old man with the good ideas or the young man who just demonstrated that he is willing to sacrifice anything for the group. Obviously, they choose the young man because what matters in their situation is not cleverness or strategy. What matters is absolute commitment. The willingness to die for everyone else. The old man becomes an advisor. His wisdom is valuable, but the leader is the one who has proven through sacrifice that he will put the group above himself no matter what.

And so these men transform themselves. Even though they started weak, they become strong. Even though they were poor and uneducated, they become wise and strategic. They have to. Survival demands it. They develop something I call cohesion, a bond that goes deeper than friendship, deeper than family. They understand each other even though they came from completely different cultures and backgrounds. They understand each other better than they ever understood their own wives and children back in their old lives.

And from cohesion comes something else, synchronicity. This is when people act in unison together, when they move as one organism. Think about a great sports team. How do the players coordinate so perfectly? They seem to know where their teammates are going to be before they get there. They pass the ball to empty space and somehow their teammate is there to receive it. This is not magic. It is synchronicity. They have practiced together so much that their minds have aligned. They think alike. They feel alike. They can predict each other's behavior instinctively. What these men on the island develop goes even further. They develop what we might call a hive mind. They can sense each other's states. They know when something is wrong with one of their brothers, even when that brother is far away.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. Let us say one of the men wanders off to collect wood. He goes too far from the safe zone. He is attacked by monkeys. He is too far away to scream for help. No one could hear him. Would his comrades know that he is in danger? Yes, they would know. Something would feel wrong. They would sense that a member of their group was in trouble even without any normal means of communication. You might think this sounds mystical or superstitious. But think about your own experience. Let us say you are a mother and one of your children goes on vacation to another country. While they are there, they get hit by a car and they are hospitalized. They have not called you. You have no information. But would you know something was wrong? Would you feel it? Most mothers would say yes. Something in their heart would tell them that their child was in danger. They would feel compelled to call. They would pick up the phone and try to reach their child even without knowing why. That is how the hive mind works. That is what synchronicity means. The connection goes beyond ordinary communication. It operates on a level that our rational minds do not fully understand.

Let me give you another scenario. 10 of the men are out collecting resources. Suddenly, they are attacked by a 100 flesh-eating monkeys. They run. There is a rope bridge they built connecting the safe zone to this area. Nine of the men make it across. You are the last one. The monkeys arrive behind you. You know that if the monkeys get across the bridge, everyone is dead. You, your comrades on the other side, everyone. What do you do? You cut the rope. You sacrifice yourself. You do not even think about it. There is no deliberation. You just act because what matters is not your individual life. What matters is the family. What matters is the group. And we know this happens in real combat situations. In trench warfare, a common tactic is to throw a grenade into the enemy trench. Sometimes there is not enough time to pick up the grenade and throw it back. So soldiers will throw themselves on the grenade. They absorb the explosion with their own bodies, saving the lives of everyone around them. This happens instantaneously. No one thinks about it. You just do it because the connection to your comrades is so deep that their lives matter more than your own. This is what absolute cohesion produces. This is what synchronicity looks like in action.

Now, let us continue the thought experiment. These men survive on the island for 20 years. They fight the monkeys. They develop their systems and rituals. They create their religion and their culture. They become a single organism that thinks and acts as one. And then suddenly one day they are all transported back to their original lives as if the island never happened except they have all their memories. They remember everything they experienced together.

What happens next? Well, first these hundred men would want to find each other again. They would

seek out their brothers. They would share their experiences with each other and renew their bonds. And then they would share their knowledge and their rituals with their children and grandchildren. They would pass down what they learned, the religion, the practices, the understanding of how to create absolute group cohesion. And over time, what would happen? This group would come to dominate the world. They would become the secret elite, the real power behind everything. There might be presidents and prime ministers and famous public figures, but secretly these men and their descendants would be the ones in control because they have something no one else has. The capacity for absolute coordination, the hive mind, the willingness to sacrifice everything for each other.

Now, someone might object. They might say, "If these men go back to their regular lives, would not the existing power structures still control things? These men were peasants. They were nobody. How would they take over?" And the answer is that on the surface there are leaders. There are visible power structures, but the real power is hidden. It operates in secret. And this group has something that allows them to operate more effectively than any public institution. What they have is absolute trust, absolute coordination, the ability to keep secrets forever. Because betraying the group means betraying everything. It means betraying the deepest bonds you have ever known.

And there is another element we need to add to this picture. While on the island, these men would develop certain rituals that seem strange from the outside but serve crucial functions. For example, the funeral rituals. When one of them sacrifices himself for the group, the others would honor that sacrifice in elaborate ways. This might include practices that seem horrifying to outsiders, cutting the body into pieces, consuming parts of the body. These rituals cement the bond between the living and the dead. They make the sacrifice sacred and eternal. To outsiders, this looks insane. But to the group, it is the most profound expression of their love for each other. And the very strangeness of the rituals is part of what makes them powerful because participating in something that the outside world would condemn creates an unbreakable bond of secrecy.

Chapter 3

Historical Precedents

Now you might be thinking this is all speculation. How do we know that anything like this has ever happened in the real world? Let me give you some historical examples that give credence to this thought experiment.

Sparta. Sparta was one of the most famous military societies in world history. A city state in ancient Greece that produced the finest warriors the world had ever seen. You may have heard of Sparta from the movie *300*. That movie depicts the Battle of Thermopylae where 300 Spartan soldiers along with some allies made a last stand against the massive Persian invasion of Greece. The Persians had hundreds of thousands of soldiers. The Greeks had a tiny force holding a narrow mountain pass. The Spartans knew they were going to die. Their leader, Leonidas, told them they would fight to the death, and they did. Every single one of them was killed. And yet their sacrifice inspired the rest of Greece to resist. Eventually the Greeks destroyed the Persian invasion. The 300 died, but their sacrifice saved Greek civilization.

How do you create men like that? Men who will stand and die without fear. Men who do not run when facing impossible odds? The answer lies in the Spartan education system, and it is genuinely disturbing. Spartan boys were taken from their homes at age five or six. They were put into schools run by older boys, maybe 10 or 11 years old, and from day one, the older boys would beat the younger ones mercilessly. There was no academic education, no reading or writing, just constant physical brutality. The older boys would attack the younger ones, beat them, humiliate them. This is what we would today call hazing. But here is what happens through this process. The young boys being beaten learn to rely on each other. Only by helping each other can they survive the brutality. They form bonds of absolute brotherhood. They learn to trust each other completely because trust is the only thing keeping them alive.

Then when these boys hit puberty around 11 or 12, something else happens. Each young boy is assigned an older mentor, an adult Spartan soldier in his late 20s or early 30s, a man who already has a wife and family. And these pairs become lovers. They have sexual relationships. Now, I need to pause here because I know this sounds shocking to modern ears. But you have to understand that at this time in history, there was no concept of homosexuality as we understand it today. Sexual categories were completely different. If you were a soldier out on campaign for years with no women around, of course, you would have sex with other men. That was just what happened. It did not define your identity. It did not make you a different kind of person. It was simply part of life. The purpose of these relationships was not pleasure. It was bonding. During the hazing phase, the young boys learned to trust each other horizontally. During the mentorship phase, they learned to be part of a larger whole. They connected to the older generation. They absorbed the culture and values and techniques of Spartan warfare.

Then at age 18 they would graduate and the graduation ritual was itself a form of transgression. The Spartans had a population of slaves called helots. These were people from conquered territories who worked the fields and did manual labor. There were strict rules governing the helots including a curfew. If a helot was outside after dark, they could be killed legally. So the graduation mission worked like this. The young Spartans would hide in the fields at night. They would wait for the sun to go down and they would watch for helots who were returning late. When they spotted one, they would sneak up behind them and cut their throats. This was ritual murder, human sacrifice. The Spartans did not call it that, of course. They called it maintaining order, enforcing discipline, but functionally that is what it was. Young men killing unarmed people as part of a sacred ritual marking their entry into adulthood. And this practice built group cohesion. It created synchronicity. Only Sparta among thousands of Greek city-

states did this. And it made everyone else think Sparta was disgusting. Everyone hated the Spartans. But it kept Sparta unified. It made Sparta the dominant military power in Greece for centuries.

Eventually, another city-state figured out what Sparta was doing. Thebes. And they created their own version of the system. But Thebes made it voluntary. In Sparta, only the elite families could be part of the system. In Thebes, anyone could join. They called their unit the Sacred Band. It consisted of 300 soldiers and they were all lovers, 150 pairs. The theory was simple. If you are fighting alongside your lover, you will fight harder. You will never retreat because retreat would mean abandoning the person you love most. You would rather die than see your lover killed or captured. And it worked. The Sacred Band became the dominant military force in Greece after Sparta declined. They were the vanguard of every Theban army. They would charge first into battle and their ferocity terrified their enemies.

Then Macedonia entered the picture. The most famous Macedonian in history is Alexander the Great. But it was his father Philip II who actually built the Macedonian military system, and Philip learned from Thebes. He studied their methods and improved upon them. Eventually, Macedonia conquered all of Greece. At the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 B.C.E., the Macedonians faced a combined army of Thebes and Athens. Macedonia won decisively. At the end of the battle, the Theban army was routed. Everyone was fleeing back to the cities, but the Sacred Band stood their ground. 300 men in the middle of the field facing the entire Macedonian army. They could have retreated. They could have fled with everyone else. Instead, they chose to die. They held their position and fought to the last man. Every single member of the Sacred Band was killed. They did not fear death. They welcomed it because what mattered to them was honor and sacrifice, not survival.

So now we have historical examples that support our thought experiment. The Spartans, the Sacred Band of Thebes, the Macedonians. These groups achieved extraordinary military success because they understood something about human psychology and social organization. But we still need to explain why this works. What is the mechanism?

Chapter 4

The Mechanism: Transgression and Cohesion

Let us think about this through the lens of game theory. Imagine there are a million people in the world all competing against each other. Only one can win the ultimate game of power. What is the best strategy? The obvious answer is cheating. If you follow the rules, you will never win. Everyone else is following the rules, too. And most of them have advantages you do not have. The only way to win is to break the rules. But here is the key insight. The best way to cheat is to coordinate with others. If everyone is playing individually and you have a group that coordinates, you have an enormous advantage.

The problem is that the moment people start coordinating, it creates an arms race. Two people coordinate. Now four people are forced to coordinate to compete. Now eight people coordinate. The coalitions get bigger and bigger. And if your coordination is visible, it can be copied. Other groups can do the same thing. So to maintain your advantage, you need to coordinate secretly. You need to conspire in ways that others cannot detect and cannot replicate.

There are various ways to coordinate secretly. Family ties, religious bonds, ethnic solidarity, shared language. These all allow groups to work together. But all of these have a problem. They are visible. Other people can see that your family works together. Other people can join your religion. Other people can learn your language. There is one form of coordination that is extremely difficult to replicate. One that creates bonds that can never be broken and secrets that can never be revealed. Transgression.

When a group participates together in breaking serious taboos, they become bound to each other in a way that nothing else can match. Everyone has a secret that would destroy them if revealed. Everyone depends on everyone else to keep that secret. The bond is unbreakable because the consequences of betrayal are total. And here is the key insight. The greater the transgression, the greater the cohesion. The worse the thing you do together, the more tightly you are bound to each other. This is counterintuitive. You would think that doing terrible things would create guilt and shame that would drive people apart. But the opposite happens. Shared transgression creates intimacy. It creates trust. It creates synchronicity.

Let us trace how this works in practice. Start with something mild. Joking, pranking. A group of friends decides to play a prank on their school. They cover all the rooms in toilet paper. It is funny. It is harmless. But they have to keep a secret. If they get caught, they will be punished. So now they have a shared secret. And this shared secret makes them closer. They are co-conspirators. And there is something else. When you break a rule, even a small one, you feel something. A little rush of adrenaline, a sense of power. I am more powerful than the rules; the rules cannot contain me. This feeling is addictive. So, you want to do it again. You want to break bigger rules. You want to feel that rush again.

Maybe you steal something. A candy bar from a store. It costs almost nothing. You could easily afford to buy it, but you steal it anyway. Before you do it, you are terrified. Everything you have ever been taught tells you stealing is wrong. Your parents, your teachers, society, all of it is screaming at you not to do this. But then you do it and how do you feel? Energized, liberated, powerful. And if your friends are with you, the friendship becomes more intense, more cohesive, more synchronized. And now you want to break more rules. You want to see how far you can go. And you keep going step by step up the ladder of transgression.

At the top of this ladder are the ultimate taboos. The things that no society permits. The things that

are forbidden everywhere by everyone. I will not speak these words aloud, but you know what they are. The two things that every culture considers absolute evils. The first involves harming the most innocent. The second involves violating the most sacred family bonds. And here is the terrible truth. Some groups do these things not because they are insane, not because they are monsters, but because these practices create the ultimate form of group cohesion. When you participate in the ultimate transgression, you are bound to your group forever. There is no going back. There is no possibility of betraying the secret because you are the secret. Your participation makes you complicit in a way that can never be undone.

And something else happens. Those who can do these things feel as though they have accessed a kind of power that ordinary people can never touch. They feel that they have broken through the limits that constrain everyone else. They feel that they have made contact with something divine or demonic or both. They believe that transgression releases divine energy, that by violating the ultimate taboos they have gained access to forces that give them power over the world.

Now I need to be very clear about something. I am not telling you that these things are good. They are evil. They are the very definition of evil. I am not telling you to do these things. Please do not do these things. What I am telling you is that these practices exist, that they have been used throughout human history by groups seeking absolute power and that they work not in some mystical sense but in a very practical sense. They create group cohesion and coordination that cannot be matched by any normal means. The leaders you see on television, the presidents and prime ministers and CEOs, many of them are puppets. They are the public face. The real power lies elsewhere. It lies with secret societies that practice these rituals, groups that are bound together by shared transgression.

Again, I want to emphasize that this is a theory, a speculation, a framework for understanding patterns that otherwise seem inexplicable. I am not claiming this is definitely true. I am offering it as a tool for thinking about power. But ask yourself, does it explain things that otherwise seem random? Does it make sense of patterns that the conventional explanations cannot account for? If powerful groups have used transgression to create absolute cohesion, would not that explain why they seem to coordinate so effectively? Would not that explain why secrets are kept for generations? Would not that explain why certain patterns repeat throughout history?

Now, I want to go deeper. If you talk to people who actually participate in these practices and they are honest with you, they will tell you that when they do these things, they access something, they feel divine power flowing through them. They believe they are making contact with gods or demons or cosmic forces. They believe that transgression is a form of worship, a way of aligning themselves with powers beyond ordinary human understanding.

Now, you might dismiss this as superstition. These people are powerful, but that does not mean they are smart. They might just be deluded. But let me offer a different interpretation. Let me try to explain how this might actually work. Not in a superstitious sense, but in a way that connects to deeper truths about the nature of reality.

Chapter 5

A Cosmic Framework

To do this, we need to return to philosophy. Remember Immanuel Kant? He proposed that we can never access objective reality directly. There is a real world out there, what he called the noumena, the things in themselves. But we can only perceive the phenomena, the world as filtered through our senses and our minds. Space and time do not exist outside of us. They are categories that our consciousness imposes on raw experience. Reality is what we imagine it to be.

Now, Kant's theory creates three fundamental questions. First, what is the noumena really? Second, where did our filters come from? Third, how do we know that we are all seeing the same world?

After Kant came Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and Hegel proposed answers to these questions. He said that the noumena is the Geist. This is a German word that is difficult to translate precisely. We usually translate it as spirit, but that does not capture its full meaning. What Hegel is saying is that the spiritual world creates the material world. We, the physical beings in the physical world, are just shells. What really matters is the realm of spirit.

To understand the concept of Geist, it helps to look at English words that derive from the same root. There are three main ones. Ghost, a parallel reality that exists alongside the material world, a spiritual dimension. Geyser, a force that is exploding or expanding, something that is becoming. Gist, the essence of things, the core, the central truth. The Geist combines all these meanings. It is a spiritual reality that exists alongside the material, is constantly expanding and becoming, and it contains the essence of everything that exists.

According to Hegel, the truth in the world is the Geist. Not what we see, but what is invisible to us. The material world is just a shadow of a deeper spiritual reality. With this concept of the Geist, we can answer Kant's three questions. First, what is the noumena? It is the spiritual world. The Geist, not the material world at all, but something far more fundamental. Second, where do our filters come from? They come from the Geist. The spiritual reality gives us our minds, our senses, our ways of organizing experience. Third, how do we all see the same world? Because we are all connected through the Geist. The spiritual reality is the common ground that unites all consciousness.

This framework has been confirmed to some extent by modern neuroscience. We know that the brain does not passively receive reality. It actively constructs our experience. The world we perceive is a model built by our nervous system, not an objective recording of what is out there.

But now Hegel's theory creates another question. Where did the Geist come from? What is its nature? What is its structure? To answer this, we need to go back even further to Plato and to a mystical tradition called Gnosticism.

In the beginning, there was what Plato and the Gnostics call the Monad or the One or Nous. Think of this as the supreme source of everything, the divine sun of the universe. The Monad operates by vibration, by breathing. When it breathes, it emanates divine power and creates new beings called dyads. These are pairs of complementary forces. These dyads in turn create further emanations, layer upon layer of spiritual reality branching out from the original source. Each layer is slightly further from the Monad, slightly less divine, slightly more fragmented. Eventually, at the very bottom of this chain of emanations, you reach the material world, Earth, the physical reality we inhabit.

So what Plato and the Gnostics are telling us is that the Geist is not a single thing. It is a multi-layered, multi-dimensional reality. And we access different layers of it all the time. When we think, when we imagine, when we dream, we are touching different levels of this vast spiritual structure. The earth, what we see around us, is just the outermost shell, the very bottom of a cosmic hierarchy, the furthest point from the divine source.

So, if this is how reality is structured, what is the purpose of life? Why are we here in this material world? Plato's answer is that the purpose of life is to return to the Monad, to ascend back up through the layers of spiritual reality toward the divine source. This is not unique to Plato. This is the framework for many of the world's great religions. Hinduism and Buddhism have essentially the same conception. Nirvana is the return to the Monad. Liberation from the cycle of material existence.

For Plato, the path of return is philosophy, the love of wisdom, specifically the study of mathematics and geometry. He believed that mathematical truths are the language of the universe. By understanding geometry, you understand the structure of reality itself. And this understanding allows you to ascend toward the divine.

But there is another path proposed by the poet and philosopher Dante. Dante agreed that the Monad is the source of everything. But he identified the Monad with love. The Monad loves its creation. That is why it created us. And because of this love, it placed a divine spark in each of us. This spark is our capacity to love others. When you love someone genuinely and unconditionally, you are expressing the divine nature within you. For Dante, the path back to the Monad is not intellectual study, but love. The more you love, the closer you get to the divine source.

So, we have this beautiful cosmic picture, a divine source emanating love, a path back to unity through either knowledge or love. It sounds wonderful, but then we have to confront a terrible question. If this is how reality works, why is there evil? Why do people do horrible things? Why do those who practice transgression seem to prosper?

Plato's answer is stark. This world does not matter. It is a shadow, a prison. Who cares if evil people control it? Let them have their power and wealth. It means nothing. The only thing that matters is the pursuit of knowledge because that is what frees you from the material realm. Ignore the evil. Focus on what is real. The material world is an illusion anyway.

Dante's answer is different and in some ways more satisfying. He says that the Monad loves us so completely that it gives us free will. This is the greatest gift possible, the freedom to choose. But free will has a dark side. It means we can choose evil. We can turn away from the divine. We can descend rather than ascend. The Monad cannot prevent this without taking away our free will. And taking away our free will would be the ultimate betrayal of love. So evil is permitted to exist as the price of freedom. But the Monad does not abandon us. Periodically it sends messengers into the world. Plato, Jesus, Dante, Buddha. These are souls who have received divine inspiration. They come to remind us of the truth, to point us back toward the light. Whether we listen is up to us.

Chapter 6

Transgression within the Cosmic Order

Now we can finally explain how transgression works within this cosmic framework. The people who practice transgression believe they are accessing divine power. And in a sense, they are right. They are accessing power, but not from the Monad. Not from the source of love and light. In this multi-layered universe, there are beings at every level. Some are closer to the Monad and partake of its loving nature. Others are further away. At the lower levels, closer to material reality, there are beings that feed on darkness, that grow stronger through suffering and violation.

When groups practice transgression, when they violate the ultimate taboos, they are aligning themselves with these lower beings. They are tuning themselves to a specific frequency in the cosmic spectrum. Think of it like the internet. There are millions of websites out there. By practicing a specific ritual, by committing a specific transgression, you lock onto a specific website, a specific channel, and everyone who practices that same transgression is connected to the same channel. This creates synchronicity. It creates the hive mind. Not because of any physical mechanism, but because everyone is plugged into the same spiritual frequency. The power is real, but it comes at a cost. You are moving away from the Monad, not toward it. You are descending, not ascending. You are selling your soul in a very literal sense.

And now we can understand something crucial about how the powerful maintain their power. They have an alternative interpretation of this cosmic structure. In their version, the Monad is the enemy. The Monad is a tyrant who wants to enslave humanity. The beings they worship are the liberators who want to free us from the Monad's oppression. This is a complete inversion of the truth. But it is what they believe, or at least it is what they tell themselves to justify what they do. They believe that by pursuing material power, by embracing transgression, by rejecting love and knowledge, they are fighting against cosmic tyranny. They see themselves as heroes. And in a twisted way, this belief gives them strength. They are not just doing evil for personal gain. They are fighting a cosmic war. They have a cause.

Of course, the reality is that they were able to gain power in the first place because transgression created cohesion. The religious framework came later as a way to rationalize what they were already doing. But now they are trapped. They built systems of power that require continued transgression. They cannot stop. They cannot repent. They have descended too far. And they have built a world that reflects their values. A world that is systematically anti-love.

Think about the systems we live under. Are they designed to foster genuine human connection, to help people love each other freely and fully? No. They are designed to separate people, to create competition, to make us distrust each other, to channel our energy into work and consumption rather than relationship.

Think about school. In a loving world, parents would simply want their children to be happy. They would support their children in discovering their own paths. But in our world, parents care about grades, about test scores, about getting into elite universities, about future careers. The child's happiness is secondary to their productivity. This is not because parents do not love their children. Parents love their children desperately. But the system teaches them that love means preparing children for competition. Love means pushing children to succeed by society's metrics. The result is that children often do not feel loved. They feel evaluated, judged, pressured. The very thing that should be most natural, the bond between parent and child, is distorted by the system. And this extends throughout society. Every

relationship is mediated by money, by status, by competition. Genuine love is rare because the system actively suppresses it.

This is what Dante was warning us about. A society that denies love is a society that is moving away from the Monad. A society that is falling deeper into the material realm. And it is not accidental. The people at the top benefit from this arrangement. They benefit from our alienation. They benefit from our loneliness. Lonely, atomized people are easy to control. Communities bound by love are not. So, they have created systems that systematically undermine love. Systems that teach us to compete rather than cooperate. Systems that make us distrust each other. Systems that keep us too busy and too tired to form deep relationships. And at the same time, they practice their rituals in secret. They maintain their own bonds of cohesion while destroying ours. This is how evil triumphs, not through superior strength, but through organization, through coordination, through using darkness to create unity while spreading division among everyone else.

Someone might ask: why do so many different traditions arrive at the same cosmic picture? How did Plato in Greece and the Buddha in India and various mystics throughout history all come to similar conclusions? The standard materialist answer is coincidence or cultural transmission. But there is another possibility. Where do thoughts come from? This is actually a question that neuroscience cannot answer. We know that the brain processes information. We know that neural patterns correlate with mental states, but we do not know where the content of thought originates. Why does one person have brilliant ideas while another person with the same brain structure has none? Why do insights seem to come from nowhere, appearing suddenly in consciousness fully formed?

The possibility is that thoughts come from the Geist. Ideas do not originate in the brain. They come through the brain from a deeper level of reality. And when different people throughout history have opened themselves to this deeper reality, they have received similar insights because the truth is the truth. The structure of the cosmos is what it is. Anyone who genuinely contacts it will see the same things. This makes more sense to me than the alternative. The alternative is that thoughts are just random firing of neurons. But that does not explain inspiration. That does not explain genius. That does not explain why someone can be wrestling with a problem for years and then suddenly see the answer in a flash. Something is communicating with us. Something is sending ideas into our minds. The question is what? And how do we open ourselves to receive the good rather than the evil?

Chapter 7

Conclusion: The Path Forward

So where does this leave us? If the powerful are organized through transgression, if they have built systems to maintain their power, if they are aligned with dark forces, what can ordinary people do? The answer according to both Plato and Dante is to focus on what matters. Do not try to beat them at their own game. Do not try to out-transgress them. That way leads only to corruption. Instead, pursue truth. Pursue love. These are the things that actually matter. These are the things that connect you to the Monad rather than separating you from it.

The powerful can control the material world. They can have their wealth and status and influence, but they cannot touch your soul unless you let them. Every moment you spend genuinely loving another person is a victory. Every insight you achieve through honest inquiry is a step toward the divine. These small things matter more than all the power and glory in the world.

And there is something else. When you pursue truth and love, you become connected to others who are doing the same thing. You start to develop your own synchronicity, your own hive mind, but one aligned with light rather than darkness. The cosmic battle is real. But you do not have to fight it alone. You do not even have to fight it consciously. You just have to keep choosing the good. Keep seeking the true. Keep loving unconditionally and know that even when things look darkest, even when evil seems triumphant, there is a deeper reality where love always wins. The Monad is eternal. The divine light cannot be extinguished and every soul that turns toward it adds to its radiance.

That is what I wanted to share with you today. These are dark topics, but I think it is important to understand how the world works. Not so that you become cynical, but so that you can make better choices about how to live. We are surrounded by systems designed to separate us from truth and love. But those systems can be resisted. Simply by recognizing them for what they are, you take away some of their power. By choosing differently, by choosing truth and love, you assert your freedom against everything that wants to enslave you. This is the struggle of human existence. It has always been the struggle and it will continue until enough souls have made the choice to return to the source.

Thank you for bearing with me through difficult material.